

Practice Act of California can find the same in the *American Medical Directory*, eleventh edition, 1929, page 177.

* * *

House of Delegates Authorizes a Study of the Medical Practice Act.—At the 1929 annual session of the California Medical Association at San Diego the Council was authorized to appoint a special committee to study the present Medical Practice Act and basic science acts and report thereon (see CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE, June 1929, page 437). At the last meeting of the Council, held in Los Angeles on September 28, 1929, the committee was appointed.

It was felt that such a study should include not only the law with all its various provisions as it now stands, but should also consider changes, deletions or additions thereto. The committee report should also recommend whether or not a proposed new medical practice act should be submitted to the next legislature, which will convene in January 1931, or whether a new medical practice act and a possible basic science law should be submitted for an initiative vote by the citizens of California in the state election which will be held in the fall of 1930.

Every member of the Association who has opinions or suggestions bearing on the Medical Practice Act of California or on a possible basic science act, is requested to put the same in writing, and to forward the same to the secretary of the Association so that the special committee may take the same into consideration.

The California Medical Association is the great and powerful organization which stands behind the California Board of Medical Examiners in its efforts to protect the public health through maintenance of standards of practice, and by insistence that illegal and incompetent persons shall not be permitted to hold themselves before the public as competent practitioners of the healing art.

The members of the California Medical Association, all of whom have secured licenses to practice in California, should maintain an active interest in the state laws having to do with such licensure.

If our present Medical Practice Act can be improved, to the mutual advantage of the lay public and of the medical profession, then there would seem to be no reason why such changes should not be considered; and if deemed advisable, suitable amendments and changes should be prepared and advocated. If the Medical Practice Act, as it reads, is as good as can be desired, then a conclusion to that effect would also be worth the while.

A thorough study of the entire licensure problem cannot be other than advantageous to all concerned. As the work continues, the subject will be further discussed in CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE.

WOMAN'S AUXILIARY OF THE C. M. A.

The Woman's Auxiliary Movement.—Several years ago the wives and sisters of some physicians who had become interested in certain social problems then confronting the medical profession formed an organization known as a Woman's Auxiliary. The movement received the endorsement of the American Medical Association, and its state medical units were urged to bring into being state auxiliaries, which in turn would be made up of county auxiliaries. The plan of organization was modeled after that of the American Medical Association, with national, state, and county units.

In some of the states, as in Texas for instance, the Woman's Auxiliary during the last few years has been able to be of great service as a contact organization between organized medicine and lay organizations; and through its good work has given a real reason for its existence.

* * *

The California Woman's Auxiliary.—In California the movement for a Woman's Auxiliary took a tangible form at this year's annual session at San Diego, when an initial organization was formed. The minutes of the organization meeting were printed in CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE of July 1929, page 68. The officers there listed will be glad to coöperate with local groups desiring to form auxiliaries, and correspondence in regard thereto is invited.

The California Woman's Auxiliary, as formed at San Diego, is to exist only until the county woman's auxiliaries, which it is hoped will be organized prior to next year's annual session, begin to function in regular form. The underlying principles and by-laws for the California Woman's Auxiliary were printed in the article previously referred to.

A perusal of the rules laid down by the Council will show that the interests of the profession and of the lay public have been constantly kept in mind. A county woman's auxiliary working along legitimate lines can be of real aid and service, both to the profession and to the laity. The members of such an auxiliary can maintain contacts and promote interests and activities vitally concerned with the public health, and can do work for which busy physicians only rarely can spare the time.

* * *

How to Organize a County Woman's Auxiliary. The formation of a county woman's auxiliary should not be difficult for any group that is interested. The following procedure could be observed.

Through a special committee appointed by the secretary of a county medical society, an invitation can be sent to a group of eligible women who are known to have an interest in coöperative endeavor along these lines.

At the meeting so held, a motion can be made to organize, adopting as the by-laws the rules

printed on page 68 of the July 1929 issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE.

Officers therein provided for should then be elected. These officers can then proceed to enlarge their organization along the lines in vogue in county auxiliaries in other states, concerning which information is given in the national publication of the Woman's Auxiliaries. Mrs. George H. Hoxie is the president of the National Woman's Auxiliary. Her address is 3719 Pennsylvania Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri. The national organization has printed an interesting leaflet on "Some Facts Concerning the Woman's Auxiliary of the American Medical Association," for which request should be made.

It is hoped that in May 1930, at the Del Monte annual session, the parent body, which came into existence at San Diego last May, can sponsor the regular state organization of the auxiliary through the representatives of the county woman's auxiliaries in California which it is felt should be in existence by that time.

With proper coöperation by the officers of county medical societies in California, the woman's auxiliary movement should be well launched before the next annual session. The movement is also commended to the consideration of our Nevada and Utah colleagues.

TO WHAT EXTENT SHOULD THE USE OF THE M. D. DEGREE BE CIRCUMSCRIBED?

A Letter From Professor A. W. Meyer of Stanford.—In the correspondence column of the Miscellany Department of this issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE is a letter from Professor A. W. Meyer, head of the department of anatomy of Stanford University School of Medicine. In his communication he discusses certain presumable limitations in the use of the degree of M. D. by holders of that degree who are not licensed to practice in California.

Professor Meyer, who received his own M. D. degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1905, was licensed to practice in Maryland, but has been in California for many years as chief of the department of anatomy at Stanford. The catalogue of that university, which is a public document, has always printed his name with his M. D. degree. Readers of this journal may remember his article on "The Pelvic Floor—Considerations Regarding Its Anatomy and Mechanics," which appeared in the December 1927 issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE.

It may not be out of place to also call attention to the fact that the California Medical Association, in its constitution, makes provision for "associate membership" for colleagues who, like Doctor Meyer, are located in California and who are engaged in teaching or public health work, but who do not engage in the private practice of medicine in the state. Such graduates of medicine are therefore looked upon as colleagues in good standing by the members of the organized medical profession.

Issues as Outlined in Letters and in Section 17 of the Medical Practice Act.—With the letter which is printed in the correspondence column, Doctor Meyer also enclosed several letters which passed between himself and Doctor Percy T. Phillips and Dr. C. B. Pinkham, respectively president and secretary of the Board of Medical Examiners of the State of California. Some excerpts from several of these which bear on the matters under discussion are also printed in the correspondence column in this number of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE.

To understand the issues which are discussed it is necessary to read the letters referred to. Some other points which are worthy of consideration are outlined below.

First of all it is well to understand that Section 17 of the Medical Practice Act, which is quoted in Doctor Meyer's letter, came into existence because some such provision was necessary in order to safeguard the public health. Its primary aim was to provide a law which would penalize those who held themselves before the California public as practicing M. D.'s when they had no such legal right.

* * *

Law Primarily Not Intended to Apply to Men Like Doctor Meyer.—It should be quite evident that the law was not brought into being to reach or penalize men like Doctor Meyer, who hold proper doctorate of medicine degrees and who, because of institutional or other work, are more or less transient residents in California. Men like Doctor Meyer who are not licensed and who do not engage in private practice cannot in any sense be construed to menace the interests of the lay public or of the medical profession.

Nevertheless the law as it is actually worded could be easily interpreted to apply to men like Doctor Meyer, even though we believe such was not its fundamental purpose. The California Board of Medical Examiners, if Doctor Pinkham is correct, evidently believes that the law does apply to Doctor Meyer. Doctor Meyer, on the other hand (and he writes that his opinion is shared by men of prominence in the legal profession) holds that Section 17 does not legally apply to him.

Expressing our own personal opinion, we are free to confess that because of the loose wording of Section 17 there would seem to be some merit in both contentions. However, we incline somewhat more to the viewpoint of Doctor Meyer than we do to that of the board, as interpreted by Doctor Pinkham.

* * *

Council of California Medical Association Might Well Consider this Law.—Would not this law be a very good matter for consideration by the Council of the California Medical Association and by the Committee on Public Policy of the Association? If the fault be in loose phraseology, why not amend Section 17 so that it will serve its real objects without subjecting to embarrassment honorable and esteemed members of the medical profession who hold M. D. degrees, who do not